

is greater than or equal to 4 mm.--

--94. A method according to claim 90, having sixteen to twenty notches.--

--95. A method according to claim 94, having eighteen notches.--

--96. A method according to claim 87, wherein the thickness of the side wall in the zones of weakness is greater than or equal to 1 mm.--

--97. A method according to claim 87, having a continuous inner surface.--

REMARKS

Claims 1-97 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 55 have been amended and claims 66-97 have been added. Claims 1 and 55 have been amended solely to more clearly describe the subject matter of the claims. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicant appreciates the courtesies shown to Applicant's representative by Examiner Heckenberg during the August 8, 2002 personal interview. Applicant's separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

The attached Appendix includes a marked-up copy of each rewritten claim (37 C.F.R. §1.121(c)(1)(ii)).

Claims 1-65 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,067,887 to Speer et al. (hereinafter "Speer") in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,942,928 to Loedding. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed during the personal interview, Applicant respectfully asserts the combination of Speer and Loedding fails to teach, disclose or suggest a mold for manufacturing a stick, wherein the mold has a seamless inner surface as recited in Applicant's claim 1.

Instead, Speer teaches a mold for manufacturing a stick (S), wherein the mold (14) has a inner surface (24) with a slit (28). Therefore, the inner surface (24) of the mold (14) of Speer, is not seamless. Similarly, Loedding discloses a substantially radial through slot (37), which helps open-up the sleeve 19 to facilitate the removal of the molded article (Fig. 3 and col. 1, lines 62-65).

With regard to claim Applicant's claim 11, Applicant respectfully asserts that the combination of Speer and Loedding, either alone or in combination, fails to teach, disclose or suggest a mold having a cavity with a sloping bottom wall as recited in Applicant's claim 11. Instead, Speer discloses a mold (14) with a flat closed bottom end (26) (Figs. 1 and 3) and Loedding discloses a piston (31) forming a bottom wall perpendicular to the internal bore (17) (Fig. 1).

Further, as discussed during the personal interview, Applicant respectfully asserts that the objective of Speer is to disclose a hot-melt adhesive recycling system and thus, the shape of the recovered hot-melt material is irrelevant because the hot-melt material is simply being molded so that it can be melted and used in the future (Abstract). Therefore, Speer, in fact, teaches away from shaping the mold in any particular way because Speer is only concerned with providing a way to recycle the unused glue for future use.

In addition, the objective of Loedding is to disclose an apparatus for hydraulically molding shaped articles by applying a pressure that acts equally upon the entire outer surface of the preform (col. 1, lines 29-34). Accordingly, Applicant respectfully asserts that it would be difficult to change the shape of the mold (39) to have a slopping bottom wall, for example, because the side of the piston (31) must align with one edge of the molded article (39) and the piston (31a) or the wall (25) must align with the other edge of the molded article (39). Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that no motivation, other than impermissible

hindsight reasoning, exists to alter the shape of the cavities disclosed in Speer or Loedding to have a slopping bottom wall as recited in Applicant's claim 11.

With regard to Applicant's claim 22, as discussed during the personal interview, Applicant respectfully asserts neither Speer nor Loedding teaches or suggests a mold having a cavity having a part formed by two successive conical surfaces converging towards an opening of the mold, as recited in claim 22.

Instead, Speer discloses a mold having an inner-cylindrical surface (24). As discussed above with regard to claim 11, the objective of Speer is to disclose a hot-melt adhesive recycling system and thus, the shape of the recovered hot-melt material is irrelevant because the hot-melt material is simply being molded so that it can be melted and used in the future (Abstract). In addition, Loedding discloses a hydraulic mold (15) which has a tubular body portion or cylinder (16) formed with an internal bore (17) (col. 1, lines 51-53 and Fig. 1). Applicant respectfully asserts that that no motivation, other than impermissible hindsight reasoning, exists to alter the shape of the cavities disclosed in Speer or Loedding to have a part formed by two successive conical surfaces converging towards an opening of the mold as recited in Applicant's claim 22.

With regard to Applicant's claims 33 and 44, the combination of Speer and Loedding fails to teach, disclose or suggest a mold including zones of weakness and a top portion having a flange as recited in Applicant's claim 33 or a mold including zones of weakness and a flange surrounding an opening of the mold as recited in Applicant's claim 44.

Instead, as discussed during the personal interview, Speer discloses a slit (28) which runs from the stress-relief bore (30) through the flange (16) (col. 3, lines 1-4). Applicant respectfully asserts that one skilled in the art would not combine the teachings of Speer and Loedding to disclose a mold having a flange and zones of weakness because if the mold (14) disclosed in Speer contained a plurality of slits (28), for example, the segments between the

slits would be prone to bending and irregularity. In addition, by having more than one slit (28), the greater the probability that the substance forming the product can leak into the surrounding carrier (12). In addition, Applicant respectfully asserts that Loedding fails to even suggest a flange because Loedding only discloses cylindrical surface 23 which terminates at the end 24 of the body 16 (col. 2, lines 1-2). Thus, Applicant respectfully asserts the combination of Speer and Loedding fails to teach or suggest a mold including zones of weakness and a top portion having a flange as recited in Applicant's claim 33 or a mold including zones of weakness and a flange surrounding an opening of the mold as recited in Applicant's claim 44.

With regard to claim 55, Applicant respectfully asserts the combination of Speer and Loedding fails to teach, disclose or suggest a mold for manufacturing a stick, wherein the mold has a side wall which includes zones of weakness facilitating radial deformation thereof and wherein the mold has an opening defined at least partially by a conical surface, the conical surface having a seamless inner wall as recited in claim 55.

Instead, Speer discloses an opening having a surface having a slit (28) and Loedding discloses a mold (15) which has a cylinder (16) into which a tapered body 19 fits. Further, the sleeve (19) of Loedding has an internal bore (20) whose diameter preferably equals the diameter of the bore (17) (col. 1, lines 51-57). Thus, Speer and Loedding do not disclose an opening defined at least partially by a conical surface having a seamless inner wall as recited in claim 55.

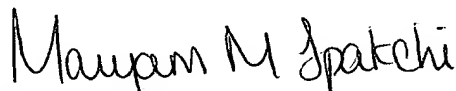
For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully asserts that the combination of Speer and Loedding fails to teach, disclose or suggest all the features of Applicant's claims 1, 11, 22, 33, 44 and 55 as well as all the features of Applicant's claims 2-10 and 69, which depend from claim 1, all the features of Applicant's claims 12-21 and 70, which depend from claim 11, all the features of Applicant's claims 23-32 and 71, which depend from claim 22, all the

features of Applicant's claim 34-43 and 72, which depend from claim 33, all the features of claims 45-54 and 73, which depend from claim 44 and all the features of Applicant's claims 56-65 and 74, which depend from claim 55. It is respectfully requested the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1 - 97 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Appendix
Request for Continued Examination
Amendment Transmittal

Date: September 5, 2002

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<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
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APPENDIX

Changes to Claims:

Claims 66-97 are added.

The following is a marked-up version of each amended claim:

1. (Twice Amended) A mold for manufacturing a stick, wherein the mold has a seamless ~~continuous~~ inner surface and a side wall which includes zones of weakness facilitating radial deformation thereof.

55. (Amended) A mold for manufacturing a stick, wherein the mold has a side wall which includes zones of weakness facilitating radial deformation thereof and wherein the mold has an opening defined at least partially by a conical surface, the conical surface having a seamless inner wall.